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EMERGING ISSUES OF SOVIET MILITARY
STRATEGY IN AN ERA OF REFORM:

PREPARING FOR A NEW MILITARY
POSTURE FOR THEATER WAR

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EMERGING ISSUES OF SOVIET MILITARY STRATEGY IN AN ERA OF REFORM:
PREPARING A NEW MILITARY POSTURE FOR THEATER WAR

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The views expressed here are those of the
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necessarily be construed as validated threat doctrine.

EMERGING ISSUES OF SOVIET MILITARY STRATEGY IN AN ERA OF REFORM:
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Introduction

> Soviet military strategy--concerned with organizing, structuring, training, and equipping the Armed Forces, and the planning, preparation, and conduct of military operations in future war--is in the process of fundamental change.¹ A new Soviet military posture and associated concepts for the conduct of theater-scale combined arms operations--shaped by a host of complex political, economic, and military considerations--is now beginning to take form. Clearly, a number of the political-military initiatives now underway were begun, or gained impetus, under the leadership of General Secretary M. S. Gorbachev. The catalysts for other recent developments in Soviet military strategy, however, particularly those of a purely military character, occurred as early as the last decade, and need to be considered as well in assessments of a developing Soviet military posture for theater war--the most critical component of Soviet military strategy today and the focus of this assessment.

By the mid-1970s, the theater-strategic operation had become one of the most important areas of study and development for Soviet military strategy. In 1975, the Voroshilov General Staff Academy of the Soviet Armed Forces issued a revised version of its classified textbook on military strategy.~ Among the revisions in this new edition was the delineation of military strategy into two interrelated components--general military

strategy (obshchaya voyennaya strategiya) dealing with "the preparation and conduct of war in general," and partial military strategy (chastnaya voyennaya strategiya), addressing the problems of conducting combined arms operations "in specific regions of the world, in different TSMAs [theaters of strategic military action] or on individual strategic directions."² The formal designation of partial strategy as an area of military study and analysis marked a further intensification of Soviet efforts to address those many issues associated with the conduct of theater operations.

Preceding and shaping this development was a growing consensus within the Soviet military and political leadership that the dangers and uncertainties associated with nuclear weapons employment made their military utility problematical, and, as a consequence, nuclear-dominated war-fighting variants of earlier years were increasingly untenable as a rational approach to planning and prosecuting a NATO/Warsaw Pact military conflict. At the same time, on-going and projected innovations in battlefield mobility, conventional weapon systems, troop control, and operational concepts offered the prospect that strategic objectives within continental TVDs could be achieved through the conduct of large-scale combined arms operations without the use of nuclear weapons--a judgement that took full recognition of the continuing potential for escalation to limited, theater, or general nuclear war.³

Because of this growing focus on nonnuclear combined arms operations of strategic scope and scale in continental theaters, military history--and particularly the combat experience of the Great Patriotic War and local wars--reemerged as a critical area of study at the General Staff Academy and throughout the Soviet military educational system.⁴ In addition, some issues of military strategy that had received scant attention in the early 1960s, by the mid-1970s had become central to the development of new concepts for conducting combined arms operations in theaters around the Soviet periphery. Indeed, General Staff-directed studies and exercises--incorporating the generalized experience of strategic offensive and defensive operations in World War II--by the mid-1970s had resulted in the formulation of concepts for nonnuclear theater-strategic operations. Soviet planners also reemphasized such "fundamental issues of strategy" as preparing theaters of strategic military action, strategic deployment of the armed forces, combat readiness, and the sustainment of far more protracted operations.

The conduct of theater-strategic operations and these associated issues of military strategy were developed and refined throughout the 1970s, and emerged more fully for public view in the early part of this decade. For example, the testing of major components of the nonnuclear theater offensive in exercise Zapad-81; Marshal N. V. Ogarkov's 1981 observation on the preeminent role of theater-strategic operations in Soviet planning; the reorganization and force modernization of major

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components of the Soviet Armed Forces by the start of the decade; and Colonel General M. A. Gareev's 1985 critique of a number of tenets associated with Soviet military strategy in the 1960s, all reflected changes in Soviet military strategy occurring or begun years earlier.⁵

Clearly, the Soviet General Staff's focus on further refining and improving every component of the theater-strategic operation continued apace into the 1980s, evidenced in part by a continuing program of military-historical research capturing the most important and applicable lessons of past wars. Thus, in the spring of 1981, the noted Soviet military historian and theorist, Lieutenant General M. M. Kir'yan, signed off on a series of over 200 topics approved for military-historical research in the 1981-1990 period.⁶ Occupying a prominent place on this list, which reflected virtually every key area of contemporary Soviet military concern, were numerous topics calling for the investigation of important issues of "general" military strategy, as well as that most important element of "partial" strategy, the conduct of theater-strategic operations.⁷ The subsequent response of Soviet military writers is instructive. They addressed a number of basic issues of military strategy including strategic deployment and its mobilization and movement components; issues of training and combat readiness; and the increasing importance of strategic reserves of all types.⁸ Additionally, as regards theater-strategic operations, they investigated the composition of friendly force groupings in

strategic offensive and defensive operations; their control and coordination; the composition of opposing forces and friendly-enemy force correlations within theaters and on major directions; frontages and depths; transition from the defensive to the offensive (or the reverse); resolution and consequences of strategic operations; and, indeed, the very basic questions of what really constitutes a "strategic operation," and what criteria should be used to assign them a predominantly offensive or defensive character.⁹

Emerging Issues of Soviet Military Strategy in the Late-1980s

By 1986/1987, Soviet attention to the kinds of strategic issues noted above was becoming further focused--a focus taking place in the context of new Soviet pronouncements on the defensive content of Soviet military doctrine, in particular as reflected by the publication of the 26 May 1987 Warsaw Pact Political Consultative Committee communique.¹⁰ In addition it appears that 1986 marked the beginning of a Soviet-designated new phase in the postwar development of military art, "arising from the military-strategic balance between the USSR and the United States and the necessity for consolidating peace and stability in the world."¹¹ Specifically, from a purely military perspective, Soviet planners describe a far more complex battlefield in this new period, characterized by new families of ground, air, and space strike systems and other military technologies that blur the distinction between the capabilities of nuclear and

conventional weapons and fundamentally alter the relationship between offense and defense.¹² An examination of the "initial period of war," long an important area of Soviet study, was intensified in light of these new political-military requirements, and Soviet assessments appearing since 1985 suggest that Soviet planners are reexamining every implication of the ways war may begin and may optimally be prepared for and prosecuted.¹³

Given this changing focus, Soviet military writings began to give considerable public attention to the conduct of defensive actions at all levels, and strategic defensive operations in particular. Recent retrospective Soviet assessments of strategic operations in World War II (and the performance of participating forces) have examined closely Soviet strategic defense in the first period of the war and in subsequent phases.¹⁴ These assessments focused in large measure on how these operations achieved (or attempted to achieve) strategic goals such as covering strategic deployment or exhausting the combat power of major enemy groupings, and also how successful defenses facilitated a transition to the offensive. For example, a Soviet article from 1986 explicitly judged that the "classic" deliberate defensive conducted at the Kursk Salient in July 1943 exemplified the kind of defense Soviet forces should strive to establish under analogous circumstances, while also recognizing that the strategic defensive at the beginning of the Great Patriotic War should be studied for what it teaches about

defensive operations under the worst of conditions.¹⁵ Soviet military sources have long treated the Battle of Kursk as the premier example of a successful strategic offensive with a defensive first phase. For example, classified lectures delivered at the General Staff Academy in the mid-1970s described the significance of Kursk in this way:

Defensive operations may also be conducted when the defending forces are in parity with those of the enemy or even superior to the opposing troops. In such cases, the aim of the defense will be to inflict casualties on the enemy by defensive action, followed by initiation of an attack against an already-exhausted enemy in the manner of the operation conducted in the Kursk Salient in 1943. In modern conditions, without the employment of nuclear weapons, such a development cannot be excluded.¹⁶

Detailed examination of various aspects of the Kursk strategic operation continued throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s.¹⁷ Recently, however, the attention of Western analysts was directed more closely to the "Kursk model" as a consequence of a Soviet article by A. A. Kokoshin and V. V. Larionov appearing in August 1987, which placed the operation in the context of "contemporary defensive doctrine."¹⁸ Kursk suggested a possible Soviet force posture that could be characterized as defensive, but which possessed the potential for theater-wide offensive actions of strategic scope and scale. Such a posture seemed compatible with likely future reductions in conventional forces and armaments taking place in the context of arms reduction agreements and on-going force restructuring and modernization programs that in themselves would rest on the

creation of fewer, but powerful and flexible, combined arms groupings.¹⁹

The same Soviet authors, further discussed the "Kursk model" the following year.²⁰ They sketched out four possible variants of future force posture ranging from opposing coalitions possessing strong offensively-oriented force groupings intended to quickly shift operations to enemy territory, destroy enemy groupings, and seize key objectives (first variant), to a fourth variant in which NATO/Warsaw Pact forces possessed only limited tactical combat capabilities. The second variant, somewhat less confrontational than the first, was still based on absorbing an enemy strike and going over to the counter-offensive or general strategic offensive. Kursk was presented as a generally applicable model for this variant (in recognition of the particular context in which this 1943 strategic operation took place).²¹ Of particular note was the assessment given of some of the combat support associated with this variant (discussed further below).

Equally instructive in light of later developments was the third variant Kokoshin and Larionov discussed. The authors described a force posture with "each side possessing the capability for routing an enemy grouping in occupied territory which has been invaded, without going over to a counteroffensive beyond the limits of the border."²² The historical analog presented for this variant was the battle of Khalkhin-Gol (20-31 August 1939) in which Soviet-Mongolian forces under G. K. Zhukov

defeated two invading divisions of the Japanese 6th Army in the Mongolian desert near the Khalkhin-Gol River. However, while "the invaders were taught a severe lesson..., an invasion of the territory from which the aggression was launched was not undertaken, despite definite, but purely military, capabilities for an 'operation of retribution'." ²³ An example from the Korean War (1950-1953) was also put forth as a more recent model under this variant. In the authors' view, a "tacit agreement of the sides," in the latter phase of the war to acknowledge geographic limits for combat actions, prevented a resumption larger scale hostilities. ²⁴

A Soviet effort to focus Western attention on this kind of variant--whether as part of an orchestrated political-military program to shape Western perceptions for deceptive reasons, or on behalf of genuine Soviet views on a desirable European security environment--was evident in the February 1989 publication of an operations plan from the early postwar period. ²⁵ The apparent top secret/sensitive (literally "of special importance") document, "Operations Plan for Actions By the Group of Soviet Occupation Forces in Germany," was dated 5 November 1946, and under the 1948 cover sheet of the Soviet General Staff's Main Operations Directorate, Western Direction. The plan called for a counterattack by Soviet forces in Germany organized into a front composed of four armies, two corps, and eighteen divisions said to be present in the Soviet occupied zone at that time. The text of the plan and the accompanying map strongly suggest that

the plan envisioned no Soviet ground combat actions beyond the border, i.e., the enemy would only be stopped and thrown back to his own territory.²⁶ Thus, it seemed to embody the main elements of the "Khalkhin-Gol model," and its timing further suggests it was published to provide input to ongoing arms control and security discussions, as well as to other Soviet-Western military contacts in their various manifestations.

General Secretary Gorbachev's December 1988 announcement of unilateral Soviet troop reductions was linked with Soviet discussions and assertions regarding defensive military doctrine, the USSR's declared evolution to a defensively-oriented military strategy, force structure changes associated with this shift, and the various forms a future force posture based on these developments might take.²⁷ Briefly, Gorbachev's reductions call for a force-wide cut of 500,000 men together with an unspecified number of weapons systems to take place over a two-year period. This will include troop reductions in the western USSR as well as the withdrawal of some units from Mongolia. As regards Soviet forces directly opposite NATO, those overall figures include the reduction of some 50,000 Soviet troops, six ground divisions, and 5,000 tanks in East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary, with the six affected divisions to be disbanded. As noted, Gorbachev stated that all remaining Soviet divisions in Eastern Europe will be "reorganized," adding that "their structure will be different from what it is now" and "clearly defensive."²⁸

Two specialized types of forces were also specifically identified in the reduction announcement--"landing-assault" (desantno-shturmovoy, better translated as air-assault) and other units including "assault-crossing" (desantno-perepravochnyy) units with their armament. Soviet air-assault forces now in Eastern Europe consist of brigade- and battalion-size units assigned to groups of forces/front headquarters and armies respectively. They are intended to attack and seize a spectrum of operational-tactical targets in NATO rear areas, and facilitate the advance of ground forces. Assault-crossing units (the only engineer units specifically named though clearly not the only ones to be affected by the cuts and reorganizations), are engineer units principally organized and equipped to support the forcing of water obstacles by combined arms formations from the march. Such specialized combat support units have been identified in some Western assessments as indicative of an offensive force posture, and their reduction may give additional weight to what is represented as a fundamental change in posture.

Since Gorbachev's announcement, new details have been released regarding some of the specific units to be withdrawn, the manner in which some aspects of divisional reorganization will be accomplished, and what will be added to the force structure in terms of "defensive" combat support.²⁹ In addition, Soviet military and civilian spokesmen continue to emphasize that the new military posture will be clearly defensive, and

presumably in a form roughly analogous to the "Kursk" or "Khal-hkin-Gol" models discussed above. Indeed, A. A. Kokoshin, in March 1989 testimony before the U.S. Congress' House Armed Services Committee, explicitly noted that Soviet military strategy had been offensive until the mid-1980s, but that following on-going restructuring and reductions, Soviet theater combined arms forces would have "a new structure aimed primarily at defensive operations."³⁰ With what Kokoshin termed a diminished capability to conduct large offensive operations or carry out short notice attacks, he likened the Soviet's new approach to the USSR's defensive posture of the 1920s.³¹

Overall, during the last three years, the USSR has moved from rather vague assertions about changing perceptions of defense and international security, to more explicit declarations of a new defensive military doctrine, a defensively-oriented military strategy, and a substantially reduced and reorganized Armed Forces establishment. Various Soviet spokesmen have advanced views of what a defensive military posture could include in this new period of postwar military development beginning in 1986, while a number of other variants can be postulated as well.

Following the implementation of the announced reductions, associated reorganizations, any subsequent arms control agreements, and an improved understanding of what mobilization, reinforcement, and training base will support the resulting force structure, Western specialists may or may not concur with Soviet

assertions about defensive posture and limited offensive capabilities. It is necessary, however, to consider other options as well, one of which is a force posture that suggests a defensive orientation, but which inherently or through covert mobilization retains a powerful capacity for sustained offensive action on a theater-strategic scale.

In this regard, a Soviet force posture variant that must be closely considered is one which Soviet planners themselves continue to reexamine and evaluate in light of its perceived, continuing relevance to military strategy, and especially because of developments that are rapidly improving movement and reinforcement potential. This variant is centered on the strategic redeployment of forces prior to the 1945 Manchurian campaign (subsequent to the regrouping of forces within the theater to cover reinforcement) and the conduct of the strategic operation itself (9 August-2 September) by radically transformed combined arms groupings. In contrast to Kursk and Khalkhin-Gol, Soviet planners have not identified the disposition of Soviet forces in the Far East prior to the 1945 Manchurian operation as a force posture model that could be applicable to the "new defense doctrine." Nevertheless, the preparation for and conduct of this strategic operation in the closing days of World War II provide an intriguing Soviet variant for a force posture that could undergo rapid change.³² The Manchurian campaign illustrates for Soviet planners and Western analysts alike how a strategic regrouping of forces--making extensive use of a variety

of deception [maskirovka] means--can rapidly change a strategic defensive posture to an offensive one.³³ While this process had many dimensions, to include the extensive employment of maritime transportation means, the movement of some 136,000 rail cars of troops and materiel from Europe to the Far East theater (a distance in some cases exceeding 10,000 kilometers) over a three-month period is notable both for the relative speed of the build-up in this remote theater, and for the extraordinary use of secrecy and concealment measures. During this period, a force of some 40 divisions and nondivisional units and resources of varying capability in the Far East was expanded to a three-front theater force of nearly 100 divisions with requisite support elements.³⁴

During this strategic regrouping, no written or telephone communications on the movement were allowed. The crews of military trains were not told of their ultimate destination, only the most immediate one, and trains avoided stops at major rail stations.³⁵ Many of the trains were allowed to run only at night, and military equipment was usually camouflaged as civilian cargo. Local troop movements to concentration areas were likewise accomplished at night and under the guise of troop training and exercises.³⁶ The Soviet judgement on the success of these measures and their current applicability is that the

skillful organization and execution of maskirovka measures demonstrated that the strike groupings of fronts and armies can secretly move and deploy on directions of impending strikes, so that a certain element of surprise can be achieved in the conduct of

operations both at the outbreak of war and in its course.³⁷

Thus, while a "Manchurian model" has not been highlighted as a force posture with implications for an adjusted military strategy under Soviet defensive doctrine, it certainly suggests how with modern means of movement and reinforcement, the "Khalkhin-Gol model" could be rapidly transformed into a force posture capable of undertaking theater-strategic operations in their most developed form.³⁸ Indeed, it should be noted that Khalkhin-Gol itself is a case study in mobilization and maskirovka insofar as Soviet forces in less than a month, while combat was in progress, increased troop strength covertly in that remote theater from 35,000 to 57,000. This kind of consideration--centered on mobilization, movement, and reinforcement potential--has long been an integral part of Soviet planning for strategic deployment and a host of related military strategic issues. While studied and written about for years in Soviet professional military literature for the insight it gives into theater strategic operations, it clearly is not the kind of historical precedent that Soviet spokesmen wish to identify explicitly with contemporary issues of defense at this time.

While more concrete assessments will have to await additional Soviet action, there are other dimensions of changing Soviet force posture that may provide insights into directions of change. Principal among these are aspects of strategic support of the Armed Forces, which because of their narrower and often technically-oriented military character tend not to be as

obscured by the ambiguities associated with broader, more complex issues like military doctrine and strategy. Nevertheless, planning and implementation of combat support measures at operational-strategic levels constitute a major input into the process of defining and shaping overall force posture, and are worth examining.

Issues of Combat Support and Implications for Emerging Military Strategy

One of the continuing fundamental issues of military strategy is a process Soviet planners term "studying and preparing theaters of strategic military action."³⁹ In this process, the Soviet General Staff and designated main and central directorates of the Ministry of Defense study every aspect of a designated theater with the aim of determining requisite force levels, mobilization and reinforcement requirements, existing and required lines of communication and movement axes, required levels of combat readiness, and enemy forces and capabilities, among many other elements. On the basis of these assessments, the General Staff allocates forward deployed forces and designated reinforcements to theaters, and prepares theater territory in terms of transportation routes, airfields, troop garrisons and deployment areas, command posts, shelters and fortifications, and a host of other measures intended to support those combined arms operations envisioned in strategic plans.⁴⁰

Soviet and Warsaw Pact military theorists have been examining closely what they believe are changing requirements for

theater war. This includes the relationship between the offense and defense, which they judge may blur the distinction between the two forms in future operations. These theorists emphasize that new, nonnuclear, highly accurate, deep strike systems can produce rapid shifts from defense to offense, and present a greater conventional threat to friendly attacking forces, both at the beginning of war and in its course. The potential for an increasingly effective enemy antiarmor defense through the use of prepared minefields, remotely-laid mines, and the use of nonexplosive obstacles of various types; the perceived potential for penetrations by enemy airborne/air assault or ground maneuver forces as projected in Western concepts like AirLand Battle; changes in potential European theater battlefields themselves to include increased urbanization and reforestation; and a renewed appreciation (reinforced by the Afghanistan experience) for the difficulties and dangers of movement support over heavily-used and vulnerable LOCs have all highlighted for Soviet planners the additional problems associated with high force densities and tank-heavy formations.⁴¹ These developments have a profound effect on the combat arms and the combat and combat service support infrastructure, as well as on all of the components associated with preparing theaters of strategic military action.

In assessing the changing problems of theater preparations engendered by such complex, interrelated considerations, Soviet engineers--whose role in theater preparations would be central--also note what they believe is a growing role for

incendiary weapons as "effective casualty-producers" in foreign armies.⁴² They address the special problems of dealing with "volumetrically-detonating gas mixtures" more familiarly known as fuel-air explosives; laser, ion beam, and acoustic weapons; and weapons based on other technologies.⁴³ In addition, engineer officers (along with other planners) are examining the many issues associated with assuming the defense at the start of a war or during its course, based on World War II, more recent local wars, and exercises. The role of combat, construction, and special engineers, together with various kinds of engineer preparations, is as integral to this examination as it is to the preparation of theaters. Colonel Yu. G. Perechnev, in leading off the 1988 diskussii on the initial period of war, highlighted the preparation of theaters and special troops, as well as the effectiveness of defensive lines as among the most important issues to be addressed, a focus that was reflected in subsequent articles in the series and elsewhere.⁴⁴ In short, what Soviet military literature is highlighting about the direction of their development in these areas further suggests that the sweeping force structure and deployment changes indicated by Gorbachev and other Soviet spokesmen--however we eventually judge their character--are already being reflected in combat support preparations.

Soviet engineers are expressing great interest in the construction and role of permanent fortified areas and field fortifications in offensive and defensive operations, often

reflected in retrospective assessments of fortifications in past conflicts, and in appraisals of current fortification requirements. In "engineer art"-- a component of Soviet military art--fortifications range from the most rudimentary (foxholes, trenches, firing pits, etc.) to the most sophisticated (command post complexes, concealed, hardened firing positions, etc.) and are classified as permanent (dolgovremennaya) and field (polevaya).⁴⁵ In assessing permanent fortifications, Soviet planners note the "unhappy fate of the Maginot Line, Siegfried Line, Atlantic Wall, Singapore Naval Fortress, and the Japanese fortified areas in Manchuria."⁴⁶ Recent Soviet publications, however, have spoken in positive terms about the performance or potential of some of the partially completed "fortified regions" (ukreplennyy rayon) along the Soviet western state border following the 22 June 1941 German attack, as well as their historical antecedents.⁴⁷ These regions were under construction following the relocation of the Soviet border some 250-300 kilometers westward (after the 1939 German-Soviet Pact), and were intended to supplement the fortified regions already deployed along the old border--the basis of what the Germans called the "Stalin Line." When completed, the new fortified regions were to consist of echeloned defensive lines based on strongpoints with hardened weapon positions, minefields, and associated mobile troop units (Red Army and Border Troops).⁴⁸ While most of these partially completed regions were quickly overrun, a few delayed German forces for some days, and one successfully covered the

northern approaches to Leningrad for two years. It was subsequently used as a staging area for Soviet offensive operations in Karelia.⁴⁹ Throughout recent Soviet appraisals there is a sharp emphasis on "what might have been" had the preparation of these fortified regions and associated forces been completed, and had the old fortified zones been kept in a state of readiness as well.⁵⁰

In appraising the offensive/defensive role of fortified regions, it should be noted that this term was used in another sense as well later in the war. That is, a fortified region was also:

a TO&E troop formation tasked with the performance of defensive missions. In the Soviet Army during the years of the Great Patriotic War, they consisted of several machine gun-artillery battalions, and support and service units. Organizationally, URs [the Russian acronym for fortified region] were part of combined arms armies.⁵¹

These field fortified regions performed quite effectively during the war. A notable example of this kind of success was reflected in the "combat path" of the 159th Field Fortified Region, which began in the defense of Moscow in 1941, and ended in 1945 in Prague, Czechoslovakia. The machine gun-artillery battalions of this large unit (soyedineniye) moved in the composition of combined arms formations across the Soviet Union and into Eastern Europe, fulfilling specialized missions in defensive and--following the seizure of the strategic initiative after Stalingrad--offensive operations that spanned the course of the war. The field UR's history is described in I. N.

Vinogradov's Defense-Storm-Victory, a title that itself suggests a number of the force posture variants described by contemporary Soviet spokesmen and underscores the dual role that may be associated with what seem to be the defensively-oriented forces.⁵²

The Soviet Union also established a number of "defensive regions" (oboronitel'nyy rayon) during the war, consisting variously of fortifications, rifle troops, naval infantry, coastal artillery, and other assets, and associated with the protection of naval bases and other key objectives.⁵³ While these were territorial in nature, they were, nevertheless, considered to be provisional operational formations comprising large units, units (chast') and naval elements.⁵⁴

More recently, in assessing the role of permanent fortifications in local wars, the Soviets noted the success of Israel's 120-km Bar-Lev Line in delaying Egyptian troops for several days and allowing the deployment and movement of operational reserves. Thus, though the line was breached, it was seen as serving a critical role in covering Israeli mobilization.⁵⁵ Soviet writings also take note of Swiss efforts near state borders to create "fortified areas and strongpoints for troop actions, including a system of protective works for various kinds of weapons and engineer obstacles." Citing "foreign" press reports, the Soviets detail the number of artillery, antitank, machine gun, and air defense firing

positions, prepared demolition sites, and other Swiss preparations.⁵⁶

Given this kind of attention and assessment--and recognizing the Soviet intention at least to present a defensive military posture to the West--we may see the establishment or designation of some form of "fortified regions" or "defensive regions" in Eastern Europe and elsewhere. These military organizations--designated "large units" (as are divisions) and "operational formations" (as are armies and fronts) respectively--may be smoothly integrated into the combined arms force structure in peacetime and organizations for combat in war.

It should be noted that Kokoshin and Larionov took special note of field fortification preparations in their discussion of a force posture based roughly on the Kursk model (their second variant). More specifically, the authors pointed out:

As for the very nature of an organization for combat, (operativnoye postroyeniye) the engineer preparation of defensive lines must become the subject of more detailed comparative research and joint discussions by representatives of each side. Questions on the degree of thinning out the defense and arraying forces according to depth may be examined in this regard, as may questions on the nature of the relationship of a positional defense to its activeness, etc.⁵⁷

Potential variations in the composition and complexity of such fortified and defensive regions in history are numerous, ranging from the relatively austere to the elaborate. Any effort to postulate specific future Soviet efforts in this regard would clearly be tentative. In general, however, Soviet writings and historical precedent suggest a predilection for

echeloned, defensive lines with hardened strongpoints; heavy, protected artillery and air defense support; mine fields and other obstacles; and a host of camouflage, concealment, and deception measures. This approach to defensive preparations appears to be wholly consistent with Soviet Defense Minister Yazov's recent statements on the coming increase in forward-deployed engineer units for mine and obstacle emplacement and the implementation of maskirovka measures, as well as increased antitank and air defense means and--in the context of overall restructuring--the conversion of some motorized rifle large units into machine gun-artillery organizations that in the past were associated with fortified regions.⁵⁸

Operating with forward deployed mobile security forces, Soviet planners may judge that fortified regions could serve to cover the deployment of combined arms forces positioned to the immediate rear, as well as the mobilization and movement of reinforcements from deep theater rear areas and the USSR. Fortified or defensive regions could pin down and channel any penetrating attackers and serve as cover and support areas for the preparation and launching of offensive or counter-offensive operations. Subsequently, field fortified regions could be employed offensively in an economy of force role, as they were in fact used during the Second World War. Combined with other engineer preparations and shelters to reduce the vulnerability of troops and equipment to new and emerging strike systems, Soviet planners may see these kinds of engineer preparations as a

further hedge against crippling surprise attack, that would not be incompatible with combined arms offensive operations by a force structure that was smaller, more mobile, and less vulnerable.

The preparation, organization, and equipping of field fortifications undertaken by engineer units in combined arms formations constitute another area of close, current Soviet investigation. In looking for pertinent historical precedent, Soviet engineer authors again cite the Battle of Kursk as being the operation where terrain fortification "assumed its broadest scope." Some eight tactical, operational, and strategic defense lines were established to hold the Kursk salient, with a depth of 250-300 kilometers. Engineer preparations included mixed mine fields and obstacles of all types, to include 600 kilometers of barbed wire entanglements; 4,200 kilometers of trenches and communications passages; 55,854 antitank gun, rifle, and machine gun emplacements; 17,505 bunkers and protective shelters; and 5,322 command and observation posts, among other engineer works.⁵⁹

Camouflage of defensive lines--principally an engineer responsibility--was given great attention. A number of Soviet engineer authors cite German General F. W. von Mellenthin's recollection that despite aerial photography of "every meter" of front, "neither one mine nor one antitank weapon was discovered until the first tank blew up on a mine or the first Russian antitank gun opened fire."⁶⁰ Overall, as one recent Soviet

engineer assessment put it, these field fortification efforts "fully justified themselves," with the advancing Germans "halted on prepared lines, rendered lifeless, and thrown back far to the West."⁶¹ In short, as Soviet planners explicitly state, Kursk constitutes a premier example of how a deliberate defense based heavily on engineer field fortifications can contribute to a successful, subsequent counteroffensive of strategic scale. It should be noted as well that field fortifications were associated with more permanent structures and are also considered part of theater preparations.

New technologies and operational concepts, of course, have changed both the threat to personnel and equipment, the means of field fortification, and the time available to carry out engineer preparations generally. The continuing Soviet introduction of high-capacity ditching and other earthmoving equipment; mechanical minelayers; families of portable, modular bunkers, command posts, and shelters of various types; and research and development on new kinds of protective materials, all underscore Soviet interests and concerns. Developments including "concrete with polymer additives" that increase strength two or three times while substantially reducing weight; synthetic materials and composites like the U. S. product "kevlar" which is "comparable in strength to the best grades of steel but is three to four times lighter;" and materials capable of "effectively absorbing ionizing radiations," are among those cited as pertinent to modern field fortifications.⁶²

Soviet military writings have explicitly linked the role of these kinds of engineer preparations to the new defensive doctrine. A 1988 book, Engineer Support of Combat, makes the point even more specifically. This is the second edition of a work published in 1984 by the same authors, and while much of the book is identical to the first edition, there are significant differences.⁶³ For example, the following passage is included in the introduction to the 1988 version:

In May 1987 at the Berlin Conference of the Political Consultative Committee of the member states of the Warsaw Pact, a military doctrine having a defensive character was accepted. In this connection, the defensive actions of forces and their engineer support in the initial period of war acquired important significance. Special attention to preparing for such actions must be made in regard to the advance fortified equipping of positions, and the execution of preparatory measures for obstacle emplacement, the equipping of crossings and routes, water supply, and troop maskirovka.⁶⁴

Other instructive additions provide more specific attention to field and permanent fortifications in connection with newer conventional weapons (e.g., precision-guided munitions, fuel-air explosives, and laser and infrared weapons); the concealment and survivability of troops and equipment; and a reordering of engineer priorities in which the employment of fortified battalion positions to defend state borders is moved to first place (with the phrase "in the initial period of war" added in the second edition).⁶⁵ Overall, this recent major work on engineer support, though largely tactical in focus, reflects emphasis on those same theater engineer preparations, priorities, and concerns identified and discussed in works directed at the

operational or strategic levels of planning. In addition, these areas of theory and practice in "engineer art" are compatible with a force posture founded on smaller, more balanced combined arms groupings that collectively suggest the kind of defensive posture Soviet spokesmen are now proclaiming. However, as a wealth of historical precedent indicates, in certain circumstances this kind of force posture can be compatible also with offensive operations of strategic scale.

Although not within the scope of this paper to address in detail, other dimensions of theater support are receiving attention analogous to that of the combat arms and engineer support. For example, in a February 1988 article, Colonel General I. M. Golushko, the Chief of Staff of the Rear Services of the Soviet Armed Forces, reviewed the development of Soviet military logistic support since 1917.⁶⁶ He noted the many changes that had taken place, and then looked to the future. In assessing changes to come, Golushko (who is among the most widely published and authoritative of senior Soviet rear service planners and theoreticians), stressed how substantially different the Soviet rear service establishment was going to become. Golushko attributed these coming changes to new technology and force restructuring within the context of what he termed "the new defensive strategy" adopted by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union's Central Committee for the Soviet state.⁶⁷ This would necessitate, according to Golushko, "rethinking the theory and practice of providing rear service support."⁶⁸ In pointing to

the coming "fundamental change" in rear services, he referred to the greater use of computers, a reduction in the volume and weight of required consumable supplies due to technological advances, "completely new means of transport," and other advances.⁶⁹

These prospective changes, and a heightened perception of the increasing threat to tactical, operational, and strategic rear areas from new conventional strike systems compelled Golushko and other Soviet logisticians to examine more closely approaches to logistic posture in the initial period of war. The clear message emerges that "there will be neither time nor opportunity to reorganize or further ready the [rear service] system in the initial period of war."⁷⁰ Consequently, current rear service theory

should proceed from the fundamental qualitative changes in weapons and technical arming of troops, and from the most complex potential variants of war initiation by the aggressor and the conduct of intense front defensive operations to repel an enemy invasion with a subsequent transition to a decisive counteroffensive.⁷¹

Further, peacetime rear service preparations and structure must be such that in "the shifting of forces from the defensive to the counter-offensive, and major force regroupings need not be carried out along directions and lines of troop actions."⁷² Under this construct, rear services initially must sustain friendly forces upon enemy attack, but shift smoothly to supporting the conduct of offensive operations without major adjustments in the system. This will, as Soviet planners themselves detail in the latest writings, require high rear

service readiness in peacetime, the most careful attention to advance theater preparations from a logistic standpoint, and the dispersal and proper disposition of logistic forces and means to ensure their survivability and effectiveness in providing support.⁷³

Overall, the pace, eventual shape, and even continuation of engineer, rear service, and broader military developments depend directly on a Soviet political and military leadership that has itself been undergoing changes. If, however, unilateral troop reductions and force reorganizations announced by Gorbachev--together with those additional postulated developments in Soviet force structure, operational concepts, and theater preparations--are realized, they will reflect at the least a profound change in emphasis in Soviet approaches to theater operations and, perhaps, in military strategy itself.

Conclusions

Soviet military strategy up to the mid-1980s was founded on theory and practice which were successfully tested in World War II, critically examined and modified in the more than four decades since the war, and continually shaped by new technologies and evolving theater force correlations that incorporated a spectrum of changing political and military-technical factors. Despite what appear to be major changes in approach, Soviet military strategy in the new period of development is clearly shaped by these same kinds of forces, a judgement reflected well

in the intense, on-going reexamination of military-historical experience and its application to military issues shaped by new and envisioned technologies.

However we may judge its eventual character, it appears that the "defensive" force posture and military strategy described by Soviet spokesmen will have a number of features whose general form is identifiable. That is, Soviet theater forces will be founded on a force structure that is smaller in manpower, numbers of maneuver units, and conventional weapon systems like tanks that have been traditional measures of combat power for many years.⁷⁴ It will be more balanced in terms of motorized rifle-armor mix, and heavier in air defense and engineer troops of various types, with a major orientation toward obstacle emplacement and maskirovka. More extensive preparation of the theater in terms of engineer works, including the establishment of some form of permanent and/or field fortifications, together with the creation of specialized (e. g., machine gun-artillery) units to man them, seems a good possibility. Rear service preparation of the theater is retaining at least its former importance, and being shaped by requirements associated with supporting restructured combined arms forces and new technological developments.

Various concepts for operations under a new defensive force posture are being put forth by Soviet spokesmen, all beginning with defense in the initial period of war. Indeed, the attention given to every aspect of defense is a major theme throughout

recent Soviet writings. However, all of the operational concepts are predicated on retaining a substantial counteroffensive capability to, as the prominent Soviet theorist M. M. Kir'yan recently put it "immediately undertake retaliatory actions for defeating the aggressor under various situational conditions."⁷⁵

Thus, Soviet planners continue to perceive that only the offensive (or counteroffensive) can favorably resolve a theater military conflict. In addition, both historical precedent and contemporary Soviet approaches to mobilization and reinforcement suggest ways in which a defensive theater posture may be rapidly transformed--with associated maskirovka measures--into an offensive one.

The offensive potential of restructured and reduced theater forces, in terms of size and capability, is far from clear at this point. Certainly, it can be argued effectively that many of the force restructuring initiatives apparently underway have been identified in Soviet writings for some time as desirable purely from the standpoint of increased military effectiveness. They at least in part may represent Soviet responses to the many perceived changes occurring in military affairs and to future theater battlefields that require different types of forces and different interactions between offense and defense to achieve the defeat of enemy forces. The scope of these reforms and the resulting composition of forces will indicate to what extent "defensive" is an accurate characterization of the new doctrine.

Soviet military writings in the new period of development suggest that Soviet military planners will retain at least the broad context for the conduct of large-scale combined arms operations in continental theaters discussed earlier: combined arms operations coordinated, integrated, and conducted in accord with a common plan and intended to achieve decisive military-political goals will remain the basis of Soviet military contingency planning in continental theaters of strategic military action. Having said this, it is necessary to stress that the individual components of such strategic operations are changing in scope, scale, and emphasis, and that the tactics, operational art, and force structure associated with each component is evolving as well. The more precise coordination and integration of force groupings is continuing to grow in importance with increased emphasis placed on how the offensive and defensive content of strategic operations will best contribute to overall objectives, and how forces potentially more limited in size, if not combat capability, can achieve decisive results. In addition, the support infrastructure and systems required to generate, move, and sustain theater forces will become even more critical for the conduct of strategic operations of any character--offensive or defensive--in the wake of a substantial reduction of forces.

In conclusion, it should be stressed that Soviet planners explicitly recognize that major military-political objectives and war aims themselves may be accomplished through the

execution of theater strategic operations in their most fully developed form--as in the Manchurian offensive and the Kursk counteroffensive--or may be achieved through military operations of far less scale and scope--as at Khalkhin-Gol. It is clearly the latter defensive variant that the Soviet leadership seems intent on publicly advancing. In addition, the perception that military-political objectives may also be achieved by political measures incorporating real defensiveness in military affairs, is a view that may be playing a growing role in Soviet thinking. The real content of emerging Soviet military strategy and force posture, however, will have to be based on a rigorous assessment of military potential and concrete actions, not statements of intent.

ENDNOTES

1. See S. F. Akhromeyev, ed., Voyennyy entsiklopedicheskiy slovar' [Military encyclopedia dictionary, hereafter cited as MED], 1986 ed., s.v. Strategiya voyennaya [Military strategy], pp. 711-712; the "Military strategy" entry in N. V. Ogarkov, ed., Sovetskaya voyennaya ensiklopediya, [Soviet military encyclopedia], vol. 7, 1979, s.v. Strategiya voyennaya [Military strategy], pp. 555-565; V. D. Sokolovskiy, ed., Soviet Military Strategy, edited with analysis and commentary by Harriet Fast Scott (New York: Crane, Russak and Company, Inc., 1975); and V. Kruchinin, "Contemporary Strategic Theory on the Goals and Missions of Armed Conflict," Voyennaya mysl' (Military thought), October 1963, and translated in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Foreign Documents Division, FDD 964, 18 July 1966, pp. 11-25, for discussions of military strategy from the mid-1980s back to the early 1960s. In an article appearing in the restricted Soviet General Staff journal, V. Sokolovskiy and M. Cherednichenko, "Military Strategy and its Problems," Voyennaya mysl' (Military thought), October 1968, and translated in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Foreign Press Digest, FPD 0084/69, 4 September 1969, pp. 375-381, the authors identify the broad areas of investigation of military strategy as "...determination

of the nature, character, and condition of the outbreak of various types of wars; the theory of organization of the armed forces, of their structure, and development of a system of military equipment and armament; the theory of strategic planning; the theory of strategic deployment, establishment of strategic groupings, and the maintenance of combat readiness of the armed forces; the theory of preparation of the economy and the country as a whole for war in all respects, including preparation of the country in a moral sense, the creation of reserve supplies of arms, combat equipment, and other materiel resources; the development of methods of conducting armed struggle, of types and forms of strategic operations; determination of forms and methods of strategic leadership of the armed forces, the development of command [sic, control] systems; the study and evaluation of a probable enemy; the theory of strategic intelligence; and the theory on the possible results of a war."

2. Lecture Materials from the Voroshilov General Staff Academy, supplement to the lecture "Principles and Content of Military Strategy." It was further recognized that "achievement of the general aim of military strategy" was to be realized "through successes achieved in the realm of partial military strategy." While such a delineation has been suggested in other Soviet discussions of strategy (to include those in the preceding citation), so far as the author is aware, the distinction first appeared for approved instructional use--and perhaps for the first time in any distributed form--in the classified strategy lecture used at the Voroshilov General Staff Academy. The basic strategy lecture, along with the 1975 supplementary material, may be found in the soon to be published book, The Voroshilov Lectures: From the Soviet General Staff Academy - Issues of Military Strategy (Washington, D. C.: National Defense University Press, 1989). The basic lecture itself, without the supplement, has been published in The Journal of Soviet Military Studies 1 (April 1988): 29-53.

3. David M. Glantz, et al, The Soviet Conduct of War (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Soviet Army Studies Office, February 1987).

4. See the forthcoming volume, The Voroshilov Lectures, pp. 29-31.

5. Graham H. Turbiville, Jr., "Theater Strategic Operations: Evolving Soviet Assessments," Military Review, December 1988, pp. 24-31. As discussed in the Voroshilov General Staff Lecture Materials and other sources (e.g., John G. Hines and Phillip A. Petersen, "The Soviet Conventional Offensive in Europe," Military Review, April 1984, pp. 229), a theater strategic operation may typically include 1.) nonnuclear air operations of combined arms composition to destroy enemy aviation groupings, nuclear rocket and artillery strike resources, and other key targets in depth; 2.) anti-air operations to protect friendly

force groupings and contribute to the achievement of air superiority; 3.) front operations aimed at defeating enemy ground force groupings within the theater; 4.) naval operations in maritime regions of the TVD to destroy enemy naval groupings, interdict sea lines of communication, and conduct other actions to include the conduct of amphibious landings; 5.) airborne operations on an operational-strategic scale to accomplish or support missions ranging from the elimination of smaller, weaker states from an enemy coalition to opening major new areas of combat action deep in the enemy rear; and 6.) in a nuclear war, the infliction of theater-wide nuclear strikes by the Strategic Rocket Forces in conjunction with other land, air, and sea-based nuclear strike systems.

6. M. M. Kir'yan, "Perspektivnaya tematika voyenno-istoricheskikh issledovaniy na 1981-1990," [Perspective themes for military-historical research in the 1981-1990 period], Voyenno-istoricheskiy zhurnal [Military-historical journal, hereafter cited as MHJ], (May 1981), pp. 44-47, and (June 1981), pp. 59-61.

7. Ibid. Issues of "general strategy" included, among others, topics dealing with the creation and improvement of the structure of the Soviet Armed Forces and its components; the experience of strategic deployment, combat readiness, and training; and various kinds of strategic support. Topics of "partial strategy" related to theater-strategic operations included: "The Strategic Operation (Conditions of its Origination and Patterns of Development);" "The Development of Forms and Means of the Strategic Offensive From the Experience of the Civil War and the Great Patriotic War;" "The Organization and Conduct of the Strategic Defense From the Experience of the Great Patriotic War;" "The Preparation and Conduct of the Counteroffensive From the Experience of the Great Patriotic War;" "Problems of Troop Control From the Experience of the Great Patriotic War;" "Methods of Planning and Organizing Coordination when Preparing for Operations by Groups of Fronts From the Experience of the Great Patriotic War (Problems and Means of Resolving Them);" and "Rear Support of Combat Actions of Aviation Corps and Air Armies of the RVGK [Reserves of the Supreme High Command] in the Principal Strategic Operations of the Great Patriotic War."

8. See, for example, A. Zaporozhchenko and V. Galitskiy, "K voprosu strategicheskogo razvertyvaniya vooruzhennykh sil osnovnykh kapitalisticheskikh gosudarstv vo vtoroy mirovoy voyne," [On the question of strategic deployment of the armed forces of the main capitalist states in the second world war], MHJ (April 1984), pp. 3952; A. Khor'kov, "Iz opyta otomobilizovaniya sukhoputnykh voysk," [From the experience of mobilizing the ground forces], MHJ (April 1982), pp. 53-60; A. G. Khor'kov, "Nekotoryye voprosy strategicheskogo razvertyvaniya Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Sil v nachale Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny," [Several questions of strategic deployment by the Soviet

Armed Forces at the start of the Great Patriotic war], MHJ (January 1986), p. 15; A. P. Maryshev, "Nekotoryye voprosy strategicheskoy oborony v Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne," [Several questions on strategic defense in the Great Patriotic War], MHJ (June 1986), pp. 9-16; and V. Karpov, "Sozdaniye i ispol'zovaniye strategicheskikh rezervov v gody voyny," [The creation and employment of strategic reserves in the years of the war], MHJ (July 1985), pp. 63-67.

9. A number of these issues were addressed in a five-article series appearing in MHJ from October 1985 to July 1986. The articles in this Soviet-designated "Diskussiya" [Discussion or Debate] included V. V. Gurkin and M. I. Golovnin, "K voprosu o strategicheskikh operatsiyakh Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny, 1941-1945," (On the question of strategic operations in the Great Patriotic war, 1941-1945), MHJ (October 1985), p. 11; N. K. Glazunov and B. I. Pavlov, "K voprosu o strategicheskikh operatsiyakh Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny," MHJ (April 1986), pp. 48-50; A. I. Mikhalev and V. I. Kudryashov, "K voprosu o strategicheskikh operatsiyakh Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny, 1941-1945," MHJ (May 1986), pp. 48-50; and Kh M. Dzhelaukhov and B. N. Petrov, "K voprosu o strategicheskikh operatsiyakh Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny, 1941-1945," MHJ (July 1986), pp. 46-48. Also appearing at this same time, though not formally a part of the "Diskussiya," was the related article, Maryshev, "Nekotoryye voprosy." In the fall of 1987, an unsigned article "Itogi diskussiy o strategicheskikh operatsiyakh Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny, 1941-1945," (Results of the discussions on strategic operations of the Great Patriotic war, 1941-1945), MHJ (October 1987), pp. 8-24, capped the series. Among the conclusions reached in these assessments was an approach to classifying operations as "strategic." The Soviets have formulated and generally accepted three "fundamental criteria" for describing an operation as strategic. Specifically, a strategic operation: 1.) resolves important strategic missions and attains important military-political aims; 2.) in most cases consists of combat operations of great spatial scope and includes the participation of a considerable quantity of forces and means; and 3.) is planned by the Stavka of the Supreme High Command (VGK), with the coordination of actions by fronts, fleets, and other Services of the Armed Forces carried out by VGK representatives. Thus, as these criteria and associated Soviet discussions make clear, a strategic operation is centrally controlled at the highest level of command, is usually large and of combined arms composition, and, most importantly, accomplishes critically important military-political goals regardless of its size and scope, or the length and intensity of operations.

10. For an assessment of these developments see Jacob W. Kipp, "Soviet Military Doctrine and Conventional Arms Control," Military Review, December 1988, pp. 3-17.

11. D. M. Sukhorukov, "Na strazhe mira i bezopasnosti" [On guard for peace and security], Krasnaya zvezda [Red Star, hereafter cited as RS], 5 April 1988, attributed this assessment (with considerable license) to A. Babakov in a review of Babakov's 1987 book Vooruzhennyye Sily SSSR posle voyny (1945-1986) [The Armed Forces of the USSR after the war (1945-1986)]. M. A. Moiseyev, "S pozitsii oboronitel'noy doktriny" [From a position of defensive doctrine], RS, 10 February 1989, makes the same point more explicitly.

12. This kind of assessment, for example, also appeared in connection with a review of the Babakov book in V. G. Reznichenko, "Sovetskiye vooruzhennyye sily v poslevoyennyy period" [Soviet armed forces in the postwar period], Kommunist vooruzhennykh sil [Communist of the armed forces] (January 1988), pp. 86-88. See also David M. Glantz, "Soviet Operational Art and Tactics in an Era of Reform," (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Soviet Army Studies Office, February 1989), for a more complete discussion of the implications of this new period at the level of operational art and tactics. As noted, the increasingly complex relationship between offense and defense was addressed by a number of Soviet (and non-Soviet Warsaw Pact) authors. A concise summary judgement on the linkage between offense and defense (as noted in Maryshev, "Nekotoryye voprosy," p. 16) is clearly that "the experience of the last war dictates that the offense and defense be considered in dialectical unity as part of the same action." As regards contemporary implications, Maryshev went on to note that "with the greater complexity of the means of armed struggle and military actions themselves, the interdependence and interconditionality [of offense and defense] will become apparent to an even greater extent." A Polish author writing a few months later made the same point and expanded on it, emphasizing that the opportunities for crossing from the defense to the attack would be more frequent. See Stanislaw Koziej, "Anticipated Direction for Change in Tactics of Ground Forces," Przeglad Wojsk Ladowych, [Ground Forces Review] September 1986, pp. 5-9, translated by Dr. Harold S. Orenstein of the Soviet Army Studies Office.

13. As a consequence of decisions reached at a December 1987 military-historical conference dealing with the initial period of war (held at the Ministry of Defense Institute of Military History), MHJ began another series of articles addressing various aspects of this important topic. This series--led off by Yu. G. Perechnev, "O nekotorykh problemakh podgotovki strany i Vooruzhennykh Sil k otrazheniyu fashistskoy agressii," [On several questions of preparing the country and Armed Forces to repel fascist aggression, MHJ (April 1988), pp. 42-50, and continuing to the end of the year--followed closely on the heels of a number of other assessments of the initial period of war appearing in MHJ and elsewhere in 1986-1987.

14. See, for example, Maryshev, "Nekotoryye voprosy," (1986); R. A. Savushkin, "Evolutsiya vzglyadov na oborony v mezhvoyennyye gody," MHJ (January 1987), pp. 37-42; I. I. Yakovlenko, "O prikrytii gosudarstvennoy granitsy nakanune Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny," [On covering the state border on the eve of the Great Patriotic War], MHJ (May 1987), pp. 84-87; S. A. Gladyshev, "Obobshcheniye i ispol'zovaniye boyevogo opyta v pervom periode Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny" [Generalization and utilization of combat experience in the first period of the Great Patriotic war], MHJ (July 1987), pp. 14-20; B. N. Petrov, "Voyennyye deystviya na severo-zapadnom napravlenii v nachal'nyy period voyny" [Combat actions on the north-western direction in the initial period of the war], MHJ (July 1988), pp. 43-51; P. T. Kunitsky, "Vosstanovleniye prorrannogo strategicheskogo fronta oborony v 1941 godu" [Restoration of a penetrated strategic front in 1941], MHJ (July 1988), pp. 53-60; and A. A. Gurov, "Boyevyye deystviya sovetskikh voysk na yugo-zapadnom napravlenii v nachal'nom periode voyny" [Combat actions of soviet troops on the south-western direction in the initial period of war], MHJ (August 1988), pp. 32-41, among a number of others appearing in this time frame.

15. Maryshev, "Nekotoryye voprosy," p. 16.

16. Lecture Materials from the Voroshilov General Staff Academy, "Front Defensive Operations."

17. For example, the 40th anniversary of Kursk saw the publication of A. Luchinskiy, "O nekotorykh voprosakh razvitiya strategii i operativnogo iskusstva v Kurskoy bitve" [On several questions of the development of strategy and operational art in the Kursk battle], MHJ (June 1983), pp. 26-33; and A. Bazhenov, "Razvitiye taktiki oboronitel'nogo boya po opytu Kurskoy bitvy" [Development of the tactics of defensive battle from the experience of the Kursk battle], MHJ (June 1983), pp. 34-44.

18. This considerable Western interest in the "Kursk model" was generated by the A. Kokoshin and V. Larionov article entitled "Kurskaya bitva v svete sovremennoy oboronitel'noy doktriny," [The Kursk battle in light of contemporary defensive doctrine], which appeared in the August 1987 issue of Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodnyye otnosheniya [World economics and international relations, hereafter cited as MEMO], pp. 32-40.

19. See David M. Glantz, The Soviet Force Structure in an Era of Reform (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Soviet Army Studies Office, March 1989), and Lester W. Grau, Changing Soviet Objective Depths: A Reflection of Changing Combat Circumstance (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Soviet Army Studies Office, March 1989).

20. A. Kokoshin and V. Larionov, "Protivostoyaniya sil obshchego naznacheniya v kontekste obespecheniya strategicheskoy

stabil'nosti," (The counterposition of general purpose forces in the context of strategic stability), MEMO (June 1988), pp. 23-31.

21. Ibid., p. 26.

22. Ibid., p. 27.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid. More specifically, Kokoshin and Larionov noted that in the fourth phase of the war, after a measure of stability had been achieved, "the troops of the armed forces of the People's Democratic Republic of Korea and the Chinese national volunteers did not penetrate deeply into the territory of South Korea south of the 38th parallel, while American aviation refrained from bombing targets on the territory of the People's Republic of China."

25. "Operativnyy plan deystviy Gruppy sovetskikh okkupatsionnykh voysk v Germanii" [Operations plan for actions by the Group of Soviet Occupation forces in Germany], MHJ (February 1989), pp. 26-31 (with map).

26. Ibid. This plan, its assumptions, order of battle, accuracy, and implications are all in themselves of substantial interest, but beyond the topic of this paper.

27. M. S. Gorbachev speech to the United Nations, New York City, 7 December 1988. Reported in The New York Times, 8 December 1988, p. 6.

28. Ibid.

29. D. T. Yazov, "V interesakh obshchey bezopasnosti i mira," [In the interests of general security and peace], Izvestiya, 27 February 1989, presented adjusted and somewhat more detailed figures (to include 5,300 instead of 5,000 tanks from the Groups of Forces), and also addressed the timing and some of the locations from which units would be withdrawn. He also noted, as had other sources earlier, that an air assault brigade would be withdrawn from the Group of Soviet Forces, Germany.

30. "Soviets Shifting Military Strategy," The Kansas City Times, 11 March 1989, p. A9.

31. Ibid.

32. Soviet military theorists and planners continue to assess this three-front strategic operation in detail. L. N. Vnotochenko, Pobeda na dal'nem vostokey [Victory in the Far East] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1966), is one of the best book-length Soviet

assessments of the Manchurian operation, while David M. Glantz, August Storm: The Soviet 1945 Strategic Offensive in Manchuria, Leavenworth Papers, Vol. 7 and 8, (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Combat Studies Institute, 1983), remains the finest Western treatment.

33. In a Soviet reexamination of tactical, operational, and strategic force regrouping approaches begun in the late 1970s, the article by Army General I. Tret'yak, "Ob operativnom obespechenii peregruppirovki voysk v period podgotovki Man'chzhurskoy operatsii," [On the operational support of troop regrouping in the preparatory period of Manchurian operation], MHJ (November 1979), pp. 10-15, is notable in this regard. Tret'yak gives special attention to maskirovka measures.

34. Ibid. See also Jacob W. Kipp's Soviet Army Studies Office paper The Soviet Union and the War Against Japan: The Strategic Build-up for the Manchurian Campaign, August 1945 now in progress, for a full treatment of Soviet preparations for the Manchurian operation.

35. Tret'yak, "Ob operativnom obespechenii," pp. 11-12.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid., pp. 14-15.

38. In the Kokoshin/Larionov construct, this would be a rapid, shift from the third to the first variant carried out covertly.

39. Lecture Materials from the Voroshilov General Staff Academy, "General Concepts on Theaters of Strategic Military Action and Methods of Studying Their Strategic Characteristic," and "Preparation of the Territories of Theaters of Strategic Military Action," mid-1970s.

40. Ibid. sets out the framework and elements of theater assessments by the General Staff. The content and relative importance of each element changes in accord with overall military strategy and, ultimately, military doctrine.

41. See Glantz, Operational Art and Tactics, for a more developed discussion of these issues.

42. V. I. Levykin, Fortifikatsiya: proshloye i sovremennost' [Fortifications: past and contemporary times], (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1987), pp. 139-141.

43. Ibid., p. 56.

44. Perechnev, "O nekotorykh problemakh," p. 50.

45. Akhromeyev, MED, p. 783.
46. Levykin, Fortifikatsiya, p. 39.
47. Ibid., pp. 38-39; S. F. Aganov, Inzhenernyye voyska Sovetskoy Armii 1918-1945 [Engineer troops of the Soviet Army, 1918-1945] (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1985), p. 481; I. I. Yakovlenko, "O prikrytii gosudarstvennoy granitsy nakanune Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny," [On covering state borders on the eve of the Great Patriotic War], MHJ (May 1987), pp. 84-87; A. G. Khor'kov, "Ukreplennyye rayony na zapadnykh granitsakh SSSR" [Fortified regions on the western borders of the USSR], MHJ (December 1987), pp. 47-54; V. V. Kulikovskiy, "Ukreplennyye rayony v grazhdanskoy voyne" [Fortified regions in the civil war], MHJ (April 1988), pp. 38-41; and V. I. Belyayev, "Usileniye okhrany zapadnoy granitsy SSSR nakanune Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny" [Strengthening the defense of the western border of the USSR on the eve of the Great Patriotic war], MHJ (May 1988), pp. 50-55, among others. Recent Soviet publications also hark back to earlier published works that gave a positive assessment of the role of fortified regions. For example, the "positive assessment" given by V. A. Anfilov, Bessmertnyy podvig [Immortal feat] (Moscow: Nauka, 1971) was characterized as "restoring historical truth" in Levykin, Fortifikatsiya, p. 36.
48. Levykin, Fortifikatsiya, pp. 34-39.
49. Ibid., p. 38.
50. The organization and role of fortified regions and the likely composition of contemporary analogues will be addressed in a Soviet Army Studies Office paper now in progress.
51. Akhromeyev, MED, p. 764.
52. I. N. Vinogradov, Oborona-shturm-pobeda (Moscow: Nauka, 1968).
53. Akhromeyev, MED, p. 498.
54. Ibid. See also V. Achkasov, Iz opyta oborony voyenno-morskikh baz (1941-1942 gg.) [From the experience of the defense of naval bases (1941-1942)], MHJ (February 1979), pp. 24-30.
55. Levykin, Fortifikatsiya, pp. 143-146.
56. Ibid., p. 127.
57. Kokoshin and Larionov, "Protivostoyaniye sil," p. 26. Kokoshin, in discussions at the April 1989 Conference on Military Doctrine in Hungary, placed similar emphasis on the importance of deeply echeloned defenses and engineer obstacles of various types at Kursk. See J. Kipp, Trip Report, Conference on Military

Doctrine, Budapest, Hungary, 2-5 April 1989. While field fortifications at Kursk were extensive, as discussed later in the paper, field fortified regions as such, were not employed during the operation.

58. Yazov, "V interesakh."

59. Levykin, Fortifikatsiya, pp. 44-47; Luchinskiy, "O nekotorykh voprosakh," pp. 26-33; and Agonov, Inzhenernyye voyska, pp. 332-335 and 347-350.

60. Levykin, Fortifikatsiya, p. 111.

61. Ibid., p. 46. The Balaton Operation, conducted from 6-15 March 1945 in Hungary, constitutes another excellent--and closely studied--example in which a deliberate defense incorporating engineer preparations facilitated the switch to a successful counter-offensive.

62. Ibid., p. 154.

63. Ye. S. Kolibernov, Inzhenernoye obespecheniye boya [Engineer support of combat], 2d revised edition (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1988).

64. Ibid., pp. 6-7.

65. Ibid., particularly pp. 69-100.

66. I. M. Golushko, "Tyl: vchera, segodnya, zavtra" [Rear services: yesterday, today, tomorrow], Tyl vooruzhennykh sil [Rear of the armed forces] (February 1988), pp. 6-10.

67. Ibid., p. 9.

68. Ibid.

69. Ibid., pp. 9-10.

70. G. P. Pastukhovsky, "Razvertyvaniye operativnogo tyla v nachal'nyy period voyny" [Development of the operational rear in the initial period of war], MHJ (June 1988), p. 27.

71. Ibid.

72. Ibid.

73. In addition assessments such as those in Ibid., pp. 18-27, see I. M. Golushko and A. Yaremchenko, "Shtab tyla v gody voyny" [Staff of the rear services in the years of the war], Part 1, MHJ (December 1988), pp. 23-26, and Part 2 (January 1989), pp. 21-24, for a discussion of rear service lessons from the

initial period of World War II.

74. "Offensively-oriented" air assault and assault river crossing forces have been identified for withdrawal. The latter, however, have lost much of their former importance due to the introduction of new generations of amphibious equipment, while some developments have suggested that the former may be compensated for by incorporating air assault forces at tactical levels.

75. M. M. Kir'yan, "Nachal'nyy period Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny" [The initial period of the Great Patriotic war], MHJ (June 1988), pp. 11-17.